

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A reinforcing bar binding machine comprising:

- a binding wire feed mechanism for feeding out a binding wire so as to wind around a reinforcing bar;
- a binding wire grasp mechanism for grasping and twisting the winding wire wound around the reinforcing bar;
- a binding wire pull back mechanism for pulling back a loop of the binding wire wound around the reinforcing bar to be brought into close contact with the reinforcing bar and thereafter twisting the binding wire;
- control means for reversely rotating a drive system of the binding wire feed mechanism by a predetermined rotational number in pulling back the binding wire;
- detecting means for detecting the reverse rotational number; and
- means for permitting to slip the drive system for restricting a pull back tension exerted to the binding wire to be equal to or smaller than a limit value of cutting the binding wire.

Claim 2 (Original): The reinforcing bar binding machine according to Claim 1, wherein the binding wire feed mechanism comprises:

- a main drive sheave; and
- a driven sheave brought into elastic contact with the main drive sheave, and

when a feed back tension exerted to the binding wire pinched between the pair of sheaves exceeds a certain value, the sheaves are idly rotated and the pull back tension exerted to the binding wire is restricted.

Claim 3 (Original): The reinforcing bar feeding machine according to Claim 1, wherein the binding wire feed mechanism comprises:

a main drive sheave; and

a driven sheave brought into elastic contact with the main drive sheave,

the drive system of the binding wire feed mechanism includes a torque limiter, and

when a pull back tension exerted to the binding wire pinched between the pair of grooves wheels exceeds a certain value, the main drive sheave and the driven sheave are stopped so as to restrict the pull back tension exerted to the binding wire.

Claim 4 (Original): The reinforcing bar binding machine according to Claim 3, wherein the torque limiter is a friction clutch or a ball clutch.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A reinforcing bar binding machine comprising:

a drive sheave;

a driven sheave brought into elastic contact with the drive sheave; and

a motor that normally and reversely drives the drive sheave;

a lever to which the driven sheave is attached;

a spring attached to the lever, wherein the driven sheave is brought into elastic contact with the drive sheave by a spring force of the spring; and

a pulse detecting circuit that detects the rotational number of the motor,

wherein the motor normally drives the drive sheave so as to feed a binding wire, and reversely drives the drive sheave so as to pull back the binding wire until reaching a predetermined rotational number.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A reinforcing bar binding machine comprising:

a drive sheave;

a driven sheave brought into elastic contact with the drive sheave;

~~The reinforcing bar binding machine according to Claim 5, further comprising:~~

a lever to which the driven sheave is attached; ~~and~~

a spring attached to the lever, wherein the driven sheave is brought into elastic contact with the drive sheave by a spring force of the spring; and

a rotational number sensor that detects the rotational number of the drive sheave,

wherein the motor normally drives the drive sheave so as to feed a binding wire, and reversely drives the drive sheave so as to pull back the binding wire until reaching a predetermined rotational number.

Claim 7 (Cancelled).

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A reinforcing bar binding machine comprising:

a drive sheave;

a driven sheave in mesh with the drive sheave;

a motor that normally and reversely drives the drive sheave; ~~and~~

a torque limiter disposed between the motor and the drive sheave; and

a pulse detecting circuit that detects the rotational number of the motor,

wherein the motor normally drives the drive sheave so as to feed a binding wire, and reversely drives the drive sheave so as to pull back the binding wire until reaching a predetermined rotational number.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The reinforcing bar binding machine according to claim 8, wherein the torque limiter comprises one of a friction clutch and a ball clutch.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A reinforcing bar binding machine comprising:  
a drive sheave;  
a driven sheave in mesh with the drive sheave;  
a motor that normally and reversely drives the drive sheave; and  
a torque limiter disposed between the motor and the drive sheave; and  
a rotational member sensor that detects the rotational number of the drive sheave.  
~~The reinforcing bar binding machine according to claim 8,~~  
wherein the motor normally drives the drive sheave so as to feed a binding wire, and reversely drives the drive sheave so as to pull back the binding wire until reaching a predetermined rotational number.

Claim 11 (New): The reinforcing bar binding machine according to claim 1, wherein the detecting means comprises a pulse detecting circuit that detects the rotational number of a feed motor.

Claim 12 (New): The reinforcing bar binding machine according to claim 1, wherein the binding wire feed mechanism comprises a main drive sheave, and a driven sheave brought into elastic contact with the main drive sheave, and

the detecting means comprises a rotational number sensor that detects the rotational number of the main drive sheave.